

APR 11 2016

Edwards,Michelle

From: Ragle, John [john@ragle.com]
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2016 11:39 AM
To: Azar, George; DeBaun,Curtis; Morris,Don; Auler,Amy; Elliott,Earl; Nasser,Karrum;
Nation,Todd; Garrison,Neil; Crossen,Martha
Cc: Edwards,Michelle; Jeff Lewellyn; Brad Emmert
Subject: Beau Monde Rezoning

CITY CLERK

Distinguished Council Members:

I was unable to attend the Sunshine meeting last Thursday, but as the owner and managing-member of Beau Monde, LLC, I feel compelled to weigh-in on the controversy surrounding the proposed zoning change and development of our property on Poplar Street.

It has become increasingly discouraging and disappointing that recent opportunities for legitimate growth and progress in our community have been stymied by a vocal minority of the genuinely concerned, but often misinformed and sometimes irrational opinions of a few. This is particularly devastating to a community with a dwindling population, tax base and economic growth. And, it certainly does not bode well for continued business investment and assumption of risk by those of us who have done so for many years in this community.

When we first acquired this property over ten years ago, our original intent was to develop high-end residences and potentially high-end condominiums, hence the original PUD. Within a couple of years, and with only six new homes completed, it became painfully clear that this development concept was financially unsupportable.

When Mr. Emmert first approached me (following years of inactivity on this site) with his concept, I was impressed. Shortly thereafter, we ultimately elected to meet with the surrounding neighbors (on more than one occasion) to seek their input and approval. While improvements were suggested, it was apparent that most did not wish to see development of this property. Subsequently, Mr. Emmert has made countless modifications to his plan in an effort to appease and address the concerns of neighbors, Area Planning members and other officials. The result is a luxurious apartment complex with very significant green-space areas to buffer the entire perimeter. Additionally, it incorporates many high-end amenities. In my opinion, the positive attributes of this development are considerable:

- Implementation of this project will involve almost all local commerce including owners, developers, bankers, suppliers, construction workers, and other service-providers.
- It will convert what has been a scrubby vacant lot for many years in this city, into an attractive, modern, residential apartment complex, thereby meeting an existing localized housing demand.

- It potentially provides a high-end housing option for younger residents (a demographic segment we sorely need to attract and maintain) with attractive nearby amenities, including our finest City park.
- It presents no negative impact to the environment, or surrounding infrastructure.
- Contrary to those in opposition, excellent arguments can be made that there would be little or no impact to surrounding traffic, property values or the historical significance of this property.
- As I'm sure you're aware, when completed, this development would provide a significant increase in the property tax-base.

I have been approached by many acquaintances, business associates, and in one instance a total stranger who have all voiced their concern that such a positive development could be rejected. At this stage, and considering current circumstances, we have already begun to think about our alternative development options for this property. In all honesty and candor, those alternatives are not as attractive as the Emmert plan. I urge you make the right decision for our City by supporting this development and granting this zoning change.

Thank you for reading.

John G. Ragle
Ragle & Company, Inc.